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COMMITTEE ON MILITARY AFFAIRS.

ON INCREASE
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OF THE

ORDNANCE AND MEDICAL DEPARTMENTS
OF THE ARMY.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Thursday, January 19, 1905.

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INCREASE OF ORDNANCE AND MEDICAL DEPARTMENTS OF THE ARMY.

COMMITTEE ON MILITARY AFFAIRS,
Thursday, January 19, 1905.

Committee called to order at 11 o'clock a. m.

The CHAIRMAN. The Secretary of War is present and will be heard on two bills.

STATEMENT OF HON. WILLIAM H. TAFT, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Secretary TAFT. There is another bill, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. My understanding was that you were to be heard on the ordnance and the medical bills.

Secretary TAFT. But you have said something about a recommendation for the passage of a bill to promote the brevet rank.

The CHAIRMAN. The indications are that there will not be very much opposition to that; but I think the committee will be glad to have you put anything you have into the hearing, so that we may have it all here.

What bill do you desire to be heard on first, Mr. Secretary?

Secretary TAFT. I think the ordnance bill would come first; at least, that is the order in which they have been presented to me.

The CHAIRMAN. The bill is S. 5166.

Secretary TAFT. The Ordnance Department is really in a very weakened condition. There are 19 vacancies in the department, and the work there is very great indeed. The expenditure of money averages, per officer, \$187,000 a year; and with nineteen officers gone—with the vacancies in the department—there are a great many very interesting and important problems awaiting solution that will be postponed for solution for a year or two years. This is especially true of the study of explosives. There is only one officer in the Ordnance Department now that has been able to give his attention to powders. Powders have something to do with war. Indeed they play a very important part in it, and the number of large factories, really industrial concerns, that we are carrying on through that department seem to me to require a very substantial addition to the force of responsible officers. First, the bill provides an addition to the force, and, second, contains a provision by which the vacancies which now exist in the force shall be filled. Under the present system vacancies are filled by detail from other departments after an examination, but the inducement offered to officers in other branches to take the examination is nothing.

The present bill increases the inducement by permitting the promotion of an officer taking the examination to a captaincy from a first lieutenancy, and from second lieutenancy to first lieutenancy. It is objected that the examinations are too severe, but I assure the committee that no examinations in the Army are too severe. The truth is, lack of severity in examination is the great defect in our Army promotions to-day and is the reason why there is such justifiable criticism of rigid seniority in promotion as it now prevails. If examinations were severe enough really to test an officer's capacity for promotion and men retired or discharged because of failure in such examinations, the deserving and able officers would rise much more quickly and the deadwood would be gotten rid of. In the Ordnance Department they have maintained a higher grade of examinations than in any other. In that department they need men of scientific attainments, men who are able to pass examinations that show the man to have real technical requirements. If you were carrying on a private business you would not accept for your scientific manager, for the man who must know what is to be done in technical matters, a man who could not pass a technical examination or one whose degree of graduation from some technical school did not indicate that he was fully versed in the branches required for the discharge of his duties. This bill has passed the Senate, and I think it has been before the House in previous years. It was discussed in the Senate last year and went through that body practically without opposition. We conduct a great manufacturing business and we need the men to operate it with.

The CHAIRMAN. This bill increases the number of colonels by 2, lieutenant-colonels by 3, majors by 7, and captains by 6.

Secretary TAFT. And then makes the officers above that of captain permanent instead of detailed, and also provides that the interval between services under detail shall be one year instead of two—I mean services in the line. I think it was the opinion of my predecessor, Secretary Root, in whose judgment I always, of course, have the greatest confidence, that the Ordnance Department was one that could be largely conducted by details. But I think the experiment has hardly justified his conclusion in that matter. The necessity for very great study, and for almost genius in technical matters, required of the Ordnance Department in the very rapid development in the science of ordnance, it seems to me, justifies a withdrawal of its officers from the line of the Army more than in any other branch.

Mr. SLAYDEN. Authorizing a withdrawal and assignment to that department?

Secretary TAFT. Yes, sir; I think while it is, of course, well that many officers of the line shall be familiar generally with the principles to be applied in the Ordnance Department, that it is impossible to hope that by the casual details from the line we shall get men sufficiently acquainted with the niceties of the science of ordnance to justify our continuing the service by details from the line.

Mr. SLAYDEN. Is it not true, sir, that the elements now required for efficient service in the Ordnance Corps are almost as much of a specialty, and a technical specialty, as they are, for instance, in the Medical Department?

Secretary TAFT. I think it comes nearly to that.

Mr. SLAYDEN. No man would think of taking a graduate of West Point for a member of the Medical Corps.

Secretary TAFT. Hardly; that, of course, is, however, a different profession. The profession of a soldier, it is true, brings him into more or less acquaintance with the principles that apply in the Ordnance Department; and yet there is a very wide field of knowledge beyond the ordinary knowledge that an army officer must have with respect to the manufacture of ordnance, powder, and explosives. It requires a technically professional man to be familiar with it in order that the duties which the Government imposes shall be properly discharged.

Mr. SLAYDEN. A specialty, in other words?

Secretary TAFT. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. This bill is very much the same as the measure that the House passed and sent to the Senate.

Secretary TAFT. I was not familiar with that.

Mr. PATTERSON. In order to get it into the report of the hearings, will you please state the number of officers you now have in this department?

The CHAIRMAN. We have that information here, in the officer's report.

Secretary TAFT. The bill raises the number of officers of the corps from 71 to 85.

The CHAIRMAN. By taking it up by rank it is an increase of 2 colonels, 3 lieutenant-colonels, 7 majors, and 2 captains, as I figure it here. You can not figure out the number of lieutenants, because there are vacancies there, so you would have to get the law to do that. There are now 4 colonels, 6 lieutenant-colonels, and 12 majors. This bill provides for 25 captains, and there are now 23 captains. There are vacancies for some 18 or 19 first lieutenants.

Secretary TAFT. Nineteen, I think. There have only been 6 examined under the present law, though there were 19 vacancies to be filled, I believe.

The CHAIRMAN. There are 22 permanent captains and 1 detailed under the present law, and he would probably become a permanent captain. It would only be an increase in the corps of two captains over what they have now.

Is the business of the Ordnance Department behind any?

Secretary TAFT. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you have any difficulty in getting service from the Department promptly now?

Secretary TAFT. Yes, sir. I can give an example. A gentleman was brought in the other day by Senator Aldrich—a Mr. Hazzard. He said that he had invested—well, I don't know how much money, but I think perhaps \$100,000—in a factory in Rhode Island for the making of chemicals supposed to be necessary in producing high explosives; that he had applied to the Chief of the Ordnance Department to know whether he would take these pure chemicals, which could not be manufactured anywhere else in the country and which he had prepared a factory solely for the purpose of manufacturing. The Chief of the Ordnance Department was unable to tell him whether he would need the chemicals, which he was prepared to manufacture, for a year, and that if he was obliged to wait a year to know

it would be very much better for him to change his factory into a factory for making other chemicals not to be used for explosives. I sent for General Crozier, and asked how it was. He said that the statement was true; that the experiments needed for the purpose of determining whether that chemical was one which he would have to have could not be made in less than six months or a year because of the absence of experts in his corps who had given special attention to that matter. And then he mentioned the fact that I have already stated, that there was only one man who was giving attention to powder and explosives generally, because he did not have a sufficient force to attend to that and still take care of all the factories where the small arms and other arms are being manufactured.

Mr. YOUNG. Mr. Secretary, you stated that there are 19 vacancies in the corps now?

Secretary TAFT. Yes, sir; those vacancies are all in the grade of lieutenants.

The CHAIRMAN. If the Secretary will permit me at this point I will insert in the record section 23 of the act of February 22, 1901, which gives the constitution of the Ordnance Department:

The Ordnance Department shall consist of 1 chief of ordnance with the rank of brigadier-general, 4 colonels, 6 lieutenant-colonels, 12 majors, 24 captains, and 24 first lieutenants, the ordnance storekeeper, and the enlisted men, including ordnance sergeants, as now authorized by law. All vacancies created or caused by this section shall, as far as possible, be filled by promotion according to seniority, as now prescribed by law.

Those are the commissioned officers.

Secretary TAFT. When I wrote the Committee on Military Affairs of the Senate last year, there had been 25 vacancies in the grade of first lieutenant. These officers had been detailed, after examination, from the line.

The CHAIRMAN. Some of those vacancies must have been in the grade of captain?

Secretary TAFT. Yes; that is true. Of these, 1 has since been taken from the Department and promoted to a captaincy, so that that leaves 19 vacancies; but they were chiefly in the lieutenants' grade—1 or 2 in the captains.

The CHAIRMAN. Then this bill simply increases the corps 14?

Secretary TAFT. Yes; from 71 to 85.

Mr. SLAYDEN. Officers in the corps?

Secretary TAFT. Yes, sir.

Mr. YOUNG. What are the difficulties, Mr. Secretary, preventing you from keeping the corps full now?

Secretary TAFT. The difficulty is that the examination is so stiff and the inducements to go into the corps so little by reason of a lack of increase in rank, that the men do not come.

Mr. YOUNG. How do you meet that difficulty in this bill?

Secretary TAFT. You meet it by giving every man who comes in a promotion from first lieutenancy to captaincy; and then afterwards, when he reaches the majority, it becomes a permanent office.

Mr. YOUNG. Then your idea is that the real difficulty is not the want of attainments by officers in the Army, but a want of inducement to enter this corps?

Secretary TAFT. It is a want of inducement to have the officers fit themselves with the attainments, if I may use that expression; to

fit themselves. It requires hard study, and officers of the Army are not unlike the rest of us in that they want to see what is coming to them for that hard work.

Mr. HAY. Mr. Secretary, that inducement is contained in the first section of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. It makes the permanent grade of major.

Secretary TAFT. Yes, sir; but the real inducement is promotion on examination from a second lieutenancy in the line to a first lieutenancy in the Ordnance Corps, and from a first lieutenancy in the line to a captaincy.

Mr. HAY. Under the present law it is the same as transfer from the other corps.

The CHAIRMAN. The law provides that it shall be filled by detail from the line of the Army.

Secretary Root was absolutely opposed to all of the additional grades. He said he would order them, if he could not do it any other way.

Secretary TAFT. You can not order study. You can not order a man to prepare himself.

Mr. MONDELL. You have not gone to the extent of ordering men to take examinations who have not been desirous of doing so?

Secretary TAFT. Not since I have been in the Department.

Mr. MONDELL. I was talking to a young officer some time ago who was ordered to take an examination. I understood that he was not desirous of doing so, although when ordered for the examination he did pass and went into the corps; but he did not desire to go into the corps, had not expressed any desire to go, but had been ordered to take the examination, and he passed.

Secretary TAFT. That must have occurred under Mr. Root.

Mr. MONDELL. It was some time ago.

Secretary TAFT. You will find here in the report of the committee a comment on that particular matter. Cogent reasons are given in that report for disregarding the first two methods, as the first would lead to decreased efficiency by lowering the standard of admissions, which a law to increase the efficiency of the Army would hardly contemplate. The second would involve selecting officers without their own consent or applications either, first, without examination, or, second, with examination. The reasons for requiring examinations have been given, so that the first expedient would seem of doubtful value, while if examination be required it is difficult to see how an unwilling person could be induced to prepare for one. He might, of course, if he were ordered.

Mr. MONDELL. If a man were prepared and was ordered, naturally he would do his best, but he certainly would not make any preparation.

Secretary TAFT. No.

The CHAIRMAN. Secretary Root's theory was based upon the pride they would have.

Secretary TAFT. Yes.

Mr. SLAYDEN. If the permanent assignment begins with the grade of captain instead of major, would it not offer still further inducements for gentlemen to fit themselves for admission to the corps?

Secretary TAFT. I rather think not. Now you can take first lieutenants and make them captains by detail or examination. Then if

you were to make captains permanent you would reduce the opportunity of offering promotions to the younger officers of the line.

Mr. SLAYDEN. To bring them into the corps?

Secretary TAFT. In other words, you would confine necessarily all inducements to go into the corps and prepare for examination to second lieutenants, and I think we ought to have a wider field of selection. It seems to me to make the permanent officers majors—I mean the lowest rank—is sufficient.

Mr. MONDELL. In addition to that, is it not wise to have one or two grades in which men are given a trial, instead of having them made a permanent part of the corps on their first examination?

Secretary TAFT. Yes, sir.

Mr. MONDELL. A man might pass a good examination and yet not be prepared to be a good ordnance officer?

Secretary TAFT. Yes.

Mr. SLAYDEN. They still have two grades to assign from?

Secretary TAFT. You could not assign a first lieutenant, as that would give him a rank of captain. If the captain were permanent he would be taken into the corps without any previous experience under detail. I think the experience under detail is a valuable method of testing what he can do.

Mr. SLAYDEN. Could that suggestion be met in this way: After having been given the rank of captain he could be tried for a year and sent back to his regiment with the rank of first lieutenant if he did not maintain himself in the corps with manifest efficiency?

Secretary TAFT. If you make him a captain and detail him, then he is to go out at the end of four years for one year. Of course the question of detailing him back is one of option with the officer above; but if he is a captain, and his continuing to be a captain merely depends upon the examination, it is not so easy to get him out of the corps.

Mr. SLAYDEN. I had in mind the difference, the actual difference, in his position between that of an officer with a commission of a captain as a permanency and the period of preparation during which he merely had the rank and pay of a captain, although his rank in the line was first lieutenant.

Secretary TAFT. My impression is it would give a little more elasticity at that end of the corps if you make two ranks for detail instead of one.

Mr. SLAYDEN. I frankly confess that I have approached the consideration of this question very much inclined to believe that the Ordnance Department should be permanent.

Secretary TAFT. And completely separated.

Mr. SLAYDEN. Of course I want what is best for the service.

Mr. PRINCE. Under the present law you have been unable to get the required number of officers in the Ordnance Department?

Secretary TAFT. Yes.

Mr. PRINCE. Will you be kind enough to give the committee your views as to the working plan of the proposed law; how, in your judgment, it will operate to obtain the necessary number of officers, and what will be the effect upon the service?

Secretary TAFT. The reason why we have vacancies now is, first, because no one can be taken in without an examination. The examination is properly a stiff one, and it is a technical examination. And

in order to induce a member of the line, a lieutenant in the line, to take it, there must be something inuring to him of benefit if he succeeds. The difference between the ordnance and the other corps, the rank being the same, in favor of the ordnance, is not sufficiently great to make that inducement; but when a man passes an examination, and is raised to the rank above that which he holds in the line, then the inducement is sufficient.

Mr. PRINCE. So that I may have it clear, a first lieutenant takes an examination. He passes and becomes, then, a captain, taking that rank and grade. He remains such by detail for four years, and then, under this new proposed bill, goes out of the Ordnance Department?

Secretary TAFT. For a year.

Mr. PRINCE. For one year?

Secretary TAFT. Then he goes back to the rank which he then would have—it may be a lieutenantcy or a captaincy; he may by that time have reached a captaincy.

Mr. PRINCE. Unless he has been promoted in the meantime. He stays one year in that rank in the line. Is he subject to another examination one year later when detailed?

Secretary TAFT. Back?

Mr. PRINCE. Yes.

Secretary TAFT. I think he is; that is my impression.

Mr. PRINCE. That is subject to your regulation, as I understand it?

Secretary TAFT. Yes. I suppose that the examination would not be so severe as the first one, and probably merely nominal, if he had shown himself for the four years an efficient officer.

Mr. PRINCE. As I understand it, he returns after the one year's absence, takes the rank of captain, and is eligible for permanent appointment?

Secretary TAFT. To a vacancy in the majority.

Mr. PRINCE. If in the meantime his rank in the line should have gone up to that of a captain, upon taking the second examination he could be made a major under this bill?

Secretary TAFT. If there was a vacancy he might be made a permanent major.

Mr. PRINCE. Unless some one held a senior commission as captain in that same rank?

Secretary TAFT. Yes, sir.

Mr. HOLLIDAY. Is there not a sufficient amount of army pride to induce these men to fit themselves for any service without offering special inducements in the way of increase of pay and so forth?

Secretary TAFT. Experience has not shown it; that is all I can say.

The CHAIRMAN. Is it true that these officers have much more to do than any other in the Army?

Secretary TAFT. I think that is true. Of course they have this advantage over a line officer, that the places to which they are ordered are usually more comfortable for living than the places to which a line officer may be ordered.

The CHAIRMAN. The places to which they are ordered, as a rule, are such as entail additional expense, which has to be paid out of their salary. While they have some comforts on one side, they have additional poverty on the other?

Secretary TAFT. Yes; that is quite true. The head of the Ordnance Department is a brigadier-general, and unless a war ensues, or

something extraordinary occurs which takes them out of the Ordnance Department, they may look to the brigadier-generalcy as the ultimate rank to which they may attain before retirement.

The CHAIRMAN. I would suggest to the committee that it will be impossible to conclude a hearing on the medical bill this morning, because we are compelled to be in the House at 12 o'clock, as the army bill comes up at that time. The medical bill is of considerable importance, and if it is possible we might devote next Monday entirely to that bill. That time would suit me better than any other.

Secretary TAFT. I am at the disposal of the committee at any time.

Mr. SLAYDEN. There is a gentleman here, Doctor Reed, of Cincinnati, who might find it inconvenient to remain over until Monday, and I would suggest that we hear him now if the Secretary will consent.

The CHAIRMAN. We will hear Doctor Reed.

STATEMENT OF DR. CHARLES A. L. REED, OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI, OHIO.

Doctor REED. Mr. Chairman and gentlemen: I am here to-day in my capacity as chairman of the committee on legislation appointed by the American Medical Association, and I have the pleasure of having with me one of my colleagues, Professor Rodman, of Philadelphia, though we are disappointed in the absence of Professor Welch, of the Johns Hopkins University, who is the other member of this committee. It is quite probable, however, that the adjourned hearing on this bill next Monday will enable Doctor Welch to be present, and I shall ask him to be here at that time if the committee desires.

The object of my committee is simply to present the respectful petition of the united medical profession of the United States, asking for the enactment into a law of the pending bill, Senate bill No. 4838, to reorganize the Medical Department of the Army. It is, possibly, rather a broad statement that this verbal petition is the petition of the united medical profession of the United States, and it seems to me that I can best occupy the few moments that I shall consume in explaining to you by what warrant I employ the expression. In the first place, the medical profession of the United States is organized into national, State, and county associations. The county association is the unit of organization and the State association is the connecting link between the county and the national association, which, in turn, appoints the committee that is now in your presence. When this committee begins its labors it makes inquiry of the heads of the Departments as to proposed legislation to be presented. On receipt of information through that channel it takes up these questions, first in the small committee here represented, and then it is referred to a consultative body called the national legislative council, which is composed of one member from each State medical association.

This body, after considering all bills that are presented to it, determines which bill shall be referred to the general profession for a full expression. This bill, with three others among seven or ten that were presented at a conference held in the city of Washington last year, was agreed upon; and was thereupon referred to the auxiliary

legislative committee, consisting of one member in each county in the United States—that is, it went, as a matter of fact, to every one of the 3,100 counties at present organized. This bill was sent into each of these counties with instructions that it in turn be brought to the attention of the medical profession in each of those counties and to the attention of leading and influential citizens not members of the medical profession; that an expression of opinion be secured from them, and that the result of that expression be communicated respectively to the Senators and Representatives in Congress, and that the members of this committee—my committee—shall be informed as to the action taken. As a matter of fact, favorable reports have been received from an excess of 2,300 counties in the United States, and other counties that I know of have taken favorable action and have communicated that action directly to their Senators and Representatives. So by this mechanism we have been able to arrive at a conclusion which enables us to come into this presence and say that we represent the expressed opinion of practically the entire medical profession of the United States.

If you will pause and consider, you will see clearly the method used in the canvass for opinion. It is carried on by the auxiliary committees mentioned in the respective counties, and is made to include not only the medical profession but many of the representative members of the communities. And, gentlemen, all that I have to say, for I shall ask Doctor Rodman, who is present, to speak of some of the features of the bill, is that the petition that I respectfully present to you to-day is the petition of the united medical profession.

The CHAIRMAN. Did you search out any other measures than this one?

Doctor REED. Four other measures.

The CHAIRMAN. And ask them to select?

Doctor REED. Any alternative measure relating to this particular subject? No, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. This is the only one sent?

Doctor REED. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Did you have any report in opposition to it?

Doctor REED. I have not received one single protest, or one single expression of opposition.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you not think that the unanimity of expression is largely the result of the national organization submitting the one bill?

Doctor REED. I think, in a pretty large measure; at least it ought to have been, for it was referred to the profession at large only after it had been agreed upon by a large and influential consultative body that had been selected by the profession itself, a representative body of one from each State and Territory; as a matter of fact there were 38 members present at the council in Washington which thrashed out this bill, which was there unanimously indorsed after full discussion as being the practical remedy for existing flagrant evils. It was not thought and is not now thought that any counter measure is possible.

Mr. SLAYDEN. In that connection, I understood you to say that this particular measure was sent out to secure the opinion of the medical associations of the United States, after the committee here had gone through to consider all the bills, and they had come to the conclusion that this was the best one?

Doctor REED. As a matter of fact, we have had no alternative measure relating to this particular object; this is the only one we have seen.

The CHAIRMAN. Did you consider this one when your medical association met here last year?

Doctor REED. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. On their recommendation it was sent out for consideration?

Doctor REED. It was. Heretofore, in the absence of this organization, every possible measure relating to the status of the medical profession and to the efficiency of medical science in the public service and everything relating to public health has been offered in the name of the medical profession; and that thus the medical profession has been made to stand sponsor for all kinds of irresponsible bills. It is the object of this mechanism simply to exercise some discrimination as to bills for which the profession will stand sponsor. For that reason the legislative council went over all the bills that were presented—for example, the pure-food bill and the bill relating to the construction of a military hospital here in Washington. Then, too, we wanted some stacks put up over in the library of the Surgeon-General's office. Those bills were agreed upon as the bills for which the medical profession stood ready to assume the responsibility, and upon which it was deemed wise by the national legislative council to ask for consensus from the profession at large. I have now presented that consensus, and thank you sincerely for the opportunity to do so. I would like to introduce Doctor Rodman.

STATEMENT OF DR. WILLIAM L. RODMAN, OF PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Doctor RODMAN. I shall be most brief in what I have to say, inasmuch as I am situated as Doctor Reed, and unable to be here on Monday. I therefore appreciate the courtesy of being listened to for a moment to-day.

It would be a work of supererogation for me to cover any point so well covered by Doctor Reed. In the first place, I do not feel competent to discuss with the Committee on Military Affairs the bill in detail. There are two points, however, that I would like to say a word about. In the first place, the somewhat adverse legislation of three years ago has caused the Medical Corps of the Army to be looked upon with some disfavor by young men anxious to enter the public service.

Up to that time there were a great number of young men—a majority—who really preferred the Medical Corps of the Army. Knowing that, I was instrumental in having started at the college with which I am connected a special course to prepare young men for their examinations before the army, navy, and Marine-Hospital boards. At that time we had perhaps three times as many applicants for admission into the Army as for both the Navy and the Marine-Hospital Service. As soon as that bill was passed, however, the number of applicants fell off so quickly that we were compelled to discontinue the course. Young men found that it would no longer be profitable for them to apply for service in the Army, believing that their emoluments were not sufficiently direct and inviting to cause them to do so.

Now, undoubtedly the medical profession have been very apprecia-

tive of recent legislation, which has added materially to the betterment of the Medical Corps of the Navy and the Marine-Hospital and Public-Health Service. We very much appreciate the fact that Congress should do as much relatively for the Army as they have done for the other two services, for it is the largest and, in that sense, necessarily the greatest of the three services. The one point, however, that I would particularly like to speak to is the reserve corps. I feel that that, of all the recommendations that have been made by the Surgeon-General, who has prepared this bill so carefully, is perhaps the best. It seems to me that it is the very best thing for the Army that has ever been proposed, and I speak from experience as a former contract surgeon.

Twenty-five years ago, being broken down from service in the hospital as house surgeon, I was tendered a position in the Army as contract surgeon. I had never thought about going in the Army, and had no special desire to do so. I was told, when I asked what rank I would have, that I would be a first lieutenant, but when I went into the Army and was assigned to duty at Fort Sill, Ind. T., found that contract surgeons had no actual or even relative rank. In the first place I had been informed that I was entitled to the quarters of a first lieutenant, but learned that if a second lieutenant came along and wanted my quarters he could take them. I was entitled to nothing. I learned further that I was not to command enlisted men except in the Hospital Corps, and am now informed that by recent action of the War Department the contract surgeon is no longer able even to control members of the Hospital Corps. So a condition which was anomalous always seems to me now to have become absolutely insupportable.

I do not well see how men of sufficient self-respect and pride can longer serve in the Army as contract surgeons. In the first place, the title is offensive in itself. In the second place, having to do entirely with military people where rank is necessary, the contract doctor is a civilian. I want to say that my personal experience was most pleasant throughout, but it was due to the courtesy and the generosity of my chief, Major Williams, rather than to any actual rights. No one could have been more pleasantly situated than I was. We messed together, we fished and shot together, and, as I have said, it was his courtesy rather than any right of my own that made my service pleasant; but pleasant as it was, I was very glad to terminate it at the end of the contract period.

It takes one some time to learn everything connected with the administrative duties of a medical officer. It is much better to prevent sickness, either in peace or war, than to relieve it. In this respect the civil doctor, or contract surgeon, never can be the equal of the man who is in the regular corps, because the latter is taught problems of sanitation and administrative detail which a plain civil doctor knows absolutely nothing about. By the time the civil doctor has been in the service for some time, has been trained, and really becomes more or less useful to the Government his contract is at an end. I maintain that the contract system is a very expensive one to the Government, and has always been unsatisfactory to both sides. Adequate protection of Government supplies and property and the solution of problems of sanitation and of administrative detail can only be assured by the appointment of those carefully trained for such responsibilities. I

am sure that the Surgeon-General has drawn a bill that will do away with all the disagreeable and wasteful features of the contract system.

Now, and lastly, this bill is not only a good thing for the Army, but it is the best thing possible for the medical profession, because it will be an inspiration to the young men all over this country to take these examinations, and, if successful, to be placed upon the Reserve Corps, so that they can, in times of war, be called upon to render patriotic duty. Moreover, in time of peace, that they would be preferred, when it became necessary to employ a civil surgeon to examine recruits, examine for pensions, and to do a great many other duties which at the present time must, on account of the small number of men in the Medical Corps of the Army, devolve upon civil practitioners. So, gentlemen, by the passage of this bill you will do the best possible thing for the Army beyond any question, and I am equally sure that you will do the best thing for the medical profession in general and cause each of the 100,000 physicians in this country to applaud your action as economical, sagacious, humane, and do justice to a service of which the medical profession of America are justly proud.

I thank you.

Thereupon, at 12 o'clock noon, the committee adjourned.

COMMITTEE ON MILITARY AFFAIRS,
Monday, January 23, 1905—10.45 a. m.

STATEMENT OF SURG. GEN. R. M. O'REILLY, U. S. ARMY.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Hull). General, are you going to have the gentlemen from Philadelphia appear before the committee this morning?

General O'REILLY. Doctor Welch was the other gentleman who was mentioned on Thursday, and it is not possible for him to come.

The CHAIRMAN. We will then proceed with our hearing until the Secretary of War appears.

General O'REILLY. Mr. Chairman, in addition to the hearing accorded me last April and the brief which has been presented, I should like to make a short statement. There are two points that I desire to cover. Perhaps I did not make quite clear about the medical reserve corps; and there is another point that I wish to speak of later. The medical reserve corps, in fact, is simply a change of the status of the present contract surgeons. In place of a contract surgeon, which is a position objectionable for reasons already stated, we substitute a commissioned officer who can be called into the service at his own request and if he is required, and who at that time gets less pay than the contract surgeon. If we do not call him into the service he gets no pay at all, so he is no expense to the Government. In connection with the proposition to educate him, we believe that if the conditions offered make it sufficiently interesting for him to pass an examination, he would naturally pursue a particular line of study in preparation. We also may train them by getting young men who when required will be called into service for a comparatively short

period, they consenting thereto, and then sent back to civil life to make room for others; and secondly by permitting them to attend the Army medical school at their own expense; and in addition to that circulating among them educational matter upon various subjects.

There is one other thing, and on that head I do not want to have the slightest misapprehension or misconstruction in the minds of the committee. I refer to the expense of this proposed reorganization. We stated, on information from the Paymaster-General of the Army, which was given us a year ago, that the additional expense for the first year would be nothing. That statement was made on two conditions which do not obtain this year. The appropriation bill at that time carried 200 contract surgeons, and the Paymaster-General's comparative statement was based upon that.

Mr. PARKER. How many are there now?

General O'REILLY. There are 165 in the service, and the appropriation bill for the next fiscal year as it passed the House allows 165. The figures that were given at the time the Paymaster-General's estimate was made were based on the 200 contract surgeons authorized by the current appropriation bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Did not the Paymaster-General's estimate also cover simply the flat pay?

General O'REILLY. No, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. The pay of the first lieutenants was estimated at less than a contract surgeon?

General O'REILLY. Yes; he estimated that.

The CHAIRMAN. Would not the allowances bring it up to more than the contract surgeon?

General O'REILLY. No, I think not.

The CHAIRMAN. How much house rent do they get?

General O'REILLY. Only when they are stationed where they do not get any quarters. The contract surgeon gets nothing in the way of quarters.

The CHAIRMAN. A lieutenant would get how much for quarters?

General O'REILLY. Two rooms.

The CHAIRMAN. Twenty-four dollars a month?

General O'REILLY. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. So that if they are stationed where they get no rooms they get in addition a little more pay than the contract surgeon?

General O'REILLY. They get commutation for rooms if there; unless there they get \$200 less each year. But medical lieutenants rarely serve except with troops, so their commutation would not amount to anything. Then there is another thing: Suppose this bill were to pass at this session, a certain number of promotions would take place which would not have taken place until this year: so that makes a difference, and that statement should be revised. I would like to read what I have written out in regard to this increase of cost.

Mr. PATTERSON. Are you going to make a statement with regard to the department as it exists now?

General O'REILLY. I am talking now about the expense if this bill were to pass, compared with as it is now. The estimates made by the Paymaster-General of the Army showed that the first year there would be absolutely no additional cost. I have had that

revised, and I want to say that the estimates prepared by the Paymaster-General a year ago showed that there would be no increase in expense for the next fiscal year, and that when the increase was consummated on the fourth year the total added cost would be only \$23,000 in a pay roll of \$1,134,000. An estimate made yesterday by the Surgeon-General's Office, based on data which is probably more exact, shows that the increase of expense for the next fiscal year will be \$12,600, and that the total increase four years hence will be \$43,000. These are outside estimates which may be diminished, but can not be exceeded. Thus the increased cost for the next fiscal year will be, by the Paymaster-General's estimate, nothing; by the Surgeon-General's estimate about 1 per cent, and the ultimate increase four years hence will be between 2 and 4 per cent.

Mr. PATTERSON. Is it your idea to abolish the contract surgeons during the four years?

General O'REILLY. Yes; to substitute these in their place.

Mr. PATTERSON. Their contracts will all expire within the four years and they will not be reappointed?

General O'REILLY. Those that are at present in the service will become officers of the Reserve Medical Corps.

Mr. PARKER. How about the age limits? There is no age limit, I believe, in the reserve corps?

General O'REILLY. We think that in time of war, for instance, we could get able men who are above the age limit for entrance to the Medical Corps, and use to great advantage in hospital work, especially for the base and general hospitals.

Mr. PARKER. I thought you expected to promote from the reserve corps to the standing corps?

General O'REILLY. We expected to take those of appropriate age and who had passed the necessary examination.

Mr. PARKER. Is it not true that under the present system with contract surgeons that you select men from a number, not merely by examination, but by trial and experience? And is it not also true that a contract surgeon will come in, stay three or four years and give first-rate service, and at the end of that time he is too old to be appointed to the standing corps?

General O'REILLY. I think as a rule in those cases, where his service has been good, the Secretary has waived the age limit.

Mr. PARKER. It is a regulation. Would it be well to make a standing regulation to that effect, that where a man had entered as a contract surgeon under the age limit, and had stayed in continuously, that the accounting should be made from the time he first began serving the Government?

General O'REILLY. I think the present arrangement has been perfectly satisfactory, where the Secretary has the power to waive the age limit.

Mr. SLAYDEN. He is apt to do it?

General O'REILLY. Yes, sir.

Mr. HOLLIDAY. Does the reserve surgeon under the proposed law get any emoluments from the Government while he is not in the service?

General O'REILLY. Not one single thing.

Another object of the reserve corps is that it gives us an eligible list of men who have already been examined, and of whom we know something, to call on in cases of emergency.

The CHAIRMAN. They come in as first lieutenants?

General O'REILLY. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Ranking below all the other first lieutenants of the corps?

Mr. PARKER. Is he called in permanently, or only for a time?

General O'REILLY. Only for the time his services are necessary.

The CHAIRMAN. General, your experience in the Medical Department ought to make your views of value. In regard to this proposition, do you believe that any considerable number of these reserves, after they have gone back into practice and established themselves, in cases of war would avail themselves of this proposition to come in as first lieutenants below all the other first lieutenants of the corps; or do you think that they would want a higher position?

General O'REILLY. I think a good many would be glad to come in and do hospital work. I remember during the civil war that in Philadelphia some of the leading members of the profession there were doing that work: such men, for instance, as Doctor Gross.

The CHAIRMAN. Did they give up their practice, or did they do that as an incident to their practice?

General O'REILLY. As an incident to their practice. They were in their own native home cities. I happen to personally know about that.

The CHAIRMAN. But this is for the field service. In cities like Philadelphia, Boston, New York, and Chicago, and other large cities, if there is a considerable number in the hospitals there they will always get civilian physicians and surgeons who would be glad to do what they can. This reserve corps is supposed to be a benefit over the contract-surgeon system. I was inquiring particularly as to the men who have gone out of the corps into private practice and have succeeded. Of course, those who do not succeed will all want to come back. The men that succeed might hardly give up a lucrative practice to come back in again.

General O'REILLY. I think that patriotism and professionalism will count for a good deal. I think that plenty of men holding very good positions indeed will be glad to come in. I know that men did come in during the Spanish war who made great sacrifices to do so. Then, too, the special sphere of usefulness of reserve-corps officers will be at the base and general hospital, where the work is almost entirely professional and where there will probably be no other regular officers than the surgeon in charge. Under these conditions relative rank will be unimportant, and I think we can get reserve officers of mature age and experience to leave their practices in time of war for such work. In the field, of course, we would want young men for the few positions which would not be filled by regular medical officers.

The CHAIRMAN. Came in mostly as majors, however?

General O'REILLY. Precisely; but that is a mere matter of detail. It cost them a great deal to come into the service of the United States. I knew also some fine men who served as contract surgeons.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you think the higher rank induced them?

General O'REILLY. I think it would have been the same whatever the rank might have been.

Mr. HAY. Do you think any man who has a full practice would come into the corps, excepting in time of war?

General O'REILLY. I don't think he would excepting in time of war. It would depend largely upon how popular the war was. Beside that, there would be a large number of doctors who are very much interested in surgery, and the particular line of diseases incident to the war; and they, I think, would be very glad to offer their services, so as to have the opportunity of studying these cases.

Mr. HAY. The object of this reserve corps is not only to get surgeons when you may need them, but also to educate officers or men who may become officers in the Volunteer as well as in the Regular Army?

General O'REILLY. The volunteer question would be entirely incidental. There is nothing in this bill that practically touches the volunteer force.

Mr. HAY. I understand that; but if a man has been in the reserve corps and had some experience it would make him a good officer for the volunteer service?

General O'REILLY. Yes; it would make him a good officer to be selected for that purpose.

The CHAIRMAN. The medical reserve corps is intended to take the place of the contract surgeons, and I can see that the Government has no obligations to them any more than to the contract surgeon.

General O'REILLY. All of that portion of the bill which appears to go into details is placed there, so far as we were able to do so, to safeguard the interests of the Government.

Mr. HAY. As I understand it, if this bill were put into operation it would do away with the necessity for contract surgeons?

General O'REILLY. As we get the corps full.

Mr. HAY. You will not have any contract surgeons?

General O'REILLY. No, sir.

Mr. YOUNG. In time of peace?

General O'REILLY. Yes; and in time of war we will have men that have already been examined.

The CHAIRMAN. It seems to me, though of course your experience has given you an opinion that is worth a good deal more than mine, that the contract surgeon is worth more than the reserve, because you have young men. In the reserve corps if the man has a good practice he is not going to give it up. A contract surgeon may be a surgeon of a volunteer militia company or a regiment right away, and in case of war he would go in as surgeon of the regiment in preference to going back as a lieutenant. That is the way it strikes me.

General O'REILLY. We hope to get plenty of young men for the reserve corps also. We hope to have enough for both if the Government wants to take them in. Just now, of course, we have the experience of the Spanish war, and we know something of the qualifications of the men who served. Suppose a war should break out in the very near future. What is going to be the *modus operandi*? All States will be called upon; they will furnish so many regiments, and the organizations will include medical officers for those regiments. Congress will undoubtedly provide for the volunteer force, including the medical force.

The CHAIRMAN. We have that law now.

General O'REILLY. Yes; and besides that there will be a number of contract surgeons required. Now, to get those contract surgeons we have got to go to work and organize boards right then and there or else take them simply on their recommendations, and you know what that is worth. We hope by this bill to have a waiting list of eligible men who can be called upon in time of emergency.

Mr. DENNY. Efficient men?

General O'REILLY. Men whose efficiency has been demonstrated by examinations.

Mr. HOLLIDAY. Where do you expect to get your new officers—take them from private life?

General O'REILLY. We take them from private life. The process is this: We take men who pass an examination on a certain portion of the medical curriculum. The examinations are held all over the country. We take those men and put them in the Army Medical School, which is run by medical and other officers here on duty. They are given lectures and kept under observation for a period of eight months, and at the end of that time they have their final examination. If such examinations are satisfactory, then the candidates are commissioned in the Regular Army. That is the present process.

Mr. YOUNG. Would it be likely that a good many of these new men would come from your present force of contract surgeons?

General O'REILLY. Of the Medical Reserve Corps?

Mr. YOUNG. No; not the reserve corps, but the regular corps.

General O'REILLY. I doubt it very much. A great many of the contract surgeons that we have have already been examined for commissions at different times; I mean those that want to come into the Regular Army. Of the contract surgeons that we had during the Spanish war who wanted to enter the Regular Army pretty well all have been examined. Of those that we have at the present time I don't think any are desirous of entering who can pass the examination.

Mr. HAY. Do you have much trouble in getting surgeons for the Regular Army now?

General O'REILLY. We have a good deal of trouble.

Mr. HAY. What is the cause of that?

General O'REILLY. We think it is because of this bill passed in 1901. You will remember that Doctor Rodman stated his personal experience last week in regard to that; and we found that the number of resignations from our corps increased largely after the passage of that act of 1901. That is not so much the case now, but I think that a very large factor in that diminution is the hope that Congress will do something.

Mr. HAY. In other words, promotion is so slow that men of proper talent and ability do not care to enter?

General O'REILLY. We are going into the market and trying to buy under the market price.

Mr. PATTERSON. The main idea of this reorganization is to establish a nucleus of officers, trained in military practice, to be used in case of war, is it not?

General O'REILLY. The idea is to have sufficient strength for the present organization of the Army and capable of expansion. Does that answer your question?

Mr. PATTERSON. Not exactly. The idea in establishing this regular corps of 450 and odd members, regular commissioned officers, is not only to construct an effective organization, but to have a trained nucleus in the event of war.

General O'REILLY. Oh, yes; just the same as with all the rest of the Regular Army.

Mr. SLAYDEN. You may have stated this before I came in; and if so, I do not care to have you answer the question again; but if you have not done so I would like to know what are the inducements for young medical men to enter the corps compared with those that existed prior to the reorganization, and also in comparison with that which you propose?

Mr. YOUNG. You mean the regular corps?

Mr. SLAYDEN. Yes; the regular corps.

General O'REILLY. The percentage is given in this brief. In 1898 the percentage in the Regular Army of 25,000 men of brigadier-generals to the whole corps was one-half of 1 per cent, or 0.57 per cent. Of colonels it was 3.4 per cent; of lieutenant-colonels, 5.7 per cent; of majors, 28.5 per cent; of captains and first lieutenants, 61.7 per cent. Under the reorganization of 1901 the percentage of brigadier-generals is 0.31 per cent, against 0.57 of 1 per cent; of colonels, 2.5 per cent, as against 3.4 per cent; lieutenant-colonels, 3.8 per cent, as against 5.7 per cent; majors, 18.7 per cent, as against 28.5 per cent; captains and first lieutenants, 74.6 per cent, as against 61.7 per cent.

Mr. SLAYDEN. Now, under this proposition which is pending, what will be the inducement as compared to conditions prior to the reorganization. Is that shown also?

General O'REILLY. It will practically restore them. The colonel is increased one-tenth of 1 per cent—that is to say, it would be 3.5 per cent, as against 3.4 per cent. The lieutenant-colonel would be 5.3 per cent, as against 5.7 per cent. The major would be 24.4 per cent, as against 28.5 per cent, and the captain and first lieutenant would be 66.6 per cent, as against 61.7 per cent. That would make a lower percentage in the junior officers of the corps.

Mr. SLAYDEN. Substantially it is a reestablishment of the conditions existing prior to the reorganization?

General O'REILLY. It is, proportionately.

Mr. SLAYDEN. But not quite as good as it was some twenty-five years ago?

General O'REILLY. Not quite as good as it was in 1898, when the Spanish war broke out.

Mr. SLAYDEN. Was not there a reorganization of the corps a number of years ago by which the inducements were lessened for admission as compared with what it had been prior to that?

General O'REILLY. I think the last reorganization before took place in 1876—that is, the one prior to 1898.

Mr. SLAYDEN. It seems to me that I have heard that prior to that reorganization which, as you state, occurred in 1876, that the conditions were more favorable for the candidates for promotion than it was even under the act which controlled at the time of the Spanish-American war. Is that your understanding?

General O'REILLY. We have not figured that out.

The CHAIRMAN. The bill provides for the promotion from the grade of first lieutenant to captain in three years; the law now says

five years, and in the Engineer Corps it is fourteen years. I wish you would give the committee very full reasons for that change, because there is no question but that when we report the bill we will have to give good reasons for it.

General O'REILLY. The first reason why we desire that is because Congress has given that as the proper standard for the Navy.

Mr. SLAYDEN. For the Navy Medical Corps?

General O'REILLY. Yes. A surgeon entering the Naval Medical Corps gets an advance in rank which brings him to a grade corresponding to captain in the Army in three years' service. We are competing with them. Then that was the law prior to 1876. The reorganization of July 28, 1866, which was the organic act until it was amended in 1876, gave a promotion to the rank of captain in three years, and that is what we are proposing now. The main point in doing that is to increase the inducement, and put them on the same basis as that of the Navy. In regard to the Engineer Corps, fourteen years' service makes promotion to a captaincy obligatory, but that law does not require that they shall have served fourteen years before getting it.

The CHAIRMAN. If there is a vacancy they would get it anyhow.

General O'REILLY. In one, two, or three years.

The CHAIRMAN. That would also be in the Medical Corps if there is a vacancy.

General O'REILLY. No; because the vacancy absolutely depends upon the length of service.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there any case in the Engineering Corps short of that?

General O'REILLY. I am not familiar enough with the register to be positive, but I think so. Besides, we think that there are other compensations. An engineer officer has the very highest grades in the Army open to him. He may become a major-general or a lieutenant-general, the very head of the Army, whereas the medical officer's opportunities are limited by the organic condition of his corps—there can only be one Surgeon-General at a time, and that is as high as he can expect to get. Only a small proportion of the corps can get it.

The CHAIRMAN. The main reason, then, is that it places the two corps on equality—the Navy Medical Corps and the Army Medical Corps?

General O'REILLY. Yes, sir; so we can offer to young men the same inducements that the Navy does.

The CHAIRMAN. I understand that there is a difference now in the zeal with which young medical students seek their respective corps. In other words, they are more anxious to get into the Navy than into the Army. How is that?

General O'REILLY. I can not answer that question positively, because I do not know. I know that a short time ago it was the case.

Mr. SLAYDEN. They have a better reward.

General O'REILLY. The prospect is certainly better in the Navy than in the Army. It is not only that they get the additional grade in three years, but the percentage of higher grades is very much greater. For instance, they have 15 officers who rank as captains, and they have 15 officers next below who rank as commanders. The Navy has about 47,000 men, and the Army is supposed to have about

65,000 men. The Navy would have 15 men ranking as colonels and 15 ranking as lieutenant-colonels.

Mr. HAY. How many has the Army?

General O'REILLY. Eight colonels and 12 lieutenant-colonels. At present there is one additional colonel who was promoted by special act of Congress for his service in Habana.

Mr. PARKER. Captains in the Navy get the same salary as colonels in the Army, General? Captains of the Navy get the same pay as colonels in our Army, and on shore duty they get 15 per cent less.

General O'REILLY. I am not familiar with the intricacies of the subject, but I observe they are having some trouble about it every once in a while. The captain in the Navy ranks with the colonel in the Army, and the commander ranks with the lieutenant-colonel of the Army. I presume the pay is the same in both services.

Mr. PATTERSON. Do I understand you that under this reorganization a lieutenant who has served three years will be promoted to the grade and pay of a captain whether there is a vacancy in the list for promotions or not?

General O'REILLY. Yes; the number in each grade is not fixed by law. The number of captains depends altogether on the number of lieutenants who, having served the required time, have passed satisfactory examinations for promotion. That is now the law. The assistant surgeon has the rank of first lieutenant, and then when he has served for five years and passed the examination he gets the rank, pay, and allowances of a captain. The number that is fixed is the number of assistant surgeons, and the whole number of captains and lieutenants can not be exceeded. That is to say, if we take a lieutenant who has served five years and he becomes a captain it does not make a vacancy in the lower grades, provided the corps is full.

The CHAIRMAN. The law provides that captains and first lieutenants shall be lumped together, so many captains and so many first lieutenants, so that they don't wait for vacancies in the service.

Mr. PARKER. Is the Medical Corps now full?

General O'REILLY. No, sir.

Mr. PARKER. Where are the vacancies?

General O'REILLY. Eighteen vacancies in the assistant surgeons.

Mr. PARKER. What rank?

General O'REILLY. First lieutenants.

Mr. PARKER. Have you any applications for those vacancies?

General O'REILLY. I do not know; if so, we have not very many. The examinations take place in the spring, and I don't know exactly the number of applications that are now on file. I do not believe we have very many applications. I can let you know later the exact number.

Mr. PARKER. I wish you would do so. I simply want to know whether there are any applications now on file to fill those eighteen vacancies.

General O'REILLY. There are seven applications now on file, and experience has shown that out of this number it is not probable that more than one or two will pass.

Mr. HOLLIDAY. Are these examinations for such vacancies held generally throughout the entire country or restricted to one or two certain localities?

General O'REILLY. The examinations are held at different places throughout the country, so as to induce as many people to take the examination as possible. There is no provision in the bill for paying the expenses of those who take those examinations, therefore we conduct the examinations at as many convenient points as we can.

Mr. PRINCE. Have there been any resignations from the Medical Corps since the reorganization act of 1901?

General O'REILLY. Yes, sir. That information is contained, I think, in this brief. There have been 11 resignations.

Mr. PRINCE. Eleven of what grade?

General O'REILLY. First lieutenants. That is also mentioned in the brief. Prior to that in the same period there was but one resignation.

Mr. PRINCE. Is there a pressing necessity for these medical officers now, to look after the health and welfare of the soldiers?

General O'REILLY. In my opinion there is.

Mr. PRINCE. It is not a question of desirability, but it is a question of absolute necessity.

General O'REILLY. In my opinion it is a question of absolute necessity.

Mr. PRINCE. Wherein is the necessity?

General O'REILLY. That is my best judgment as to the necessity of this reorganization. It is a necessity; otherwise I do not think we can fill the corps with the kind of men we need, and I do not think we can give proper attention to the troops that we now have, and in time of war—

Mr. PRINCE. Just state what the present necessities are now for the care, health, and condition of the present organization.

General O'REILLY. We now have, over and above the organization of the corps proper, 165 contract surgeons—that is, we are 165 short of the number of medical officers that are required to give proper service in the Army.

Mr. PRINCE. But you can use, as you have in the past years, these contract surgeons that will answer the present purpose?

General O'REILLY. We can use them, but their service we consider is unsatisfactory and extravagant, and there is a very strong feeling, so far as we are advised, throughout the country in the proportion against the—

Mr. PRINCE. I am frank to give you, General, the question that is in my mind: Here we are to-day \$26,000,000 behind in receipts, as compared with expenditures. That does not include the Post-Office receipts and expenditures. At the rate we are going it looks as if we would be in the neighborhood of thirty or forty millions of dollars behind at the end of this fiscal year.

Now, I am frank to say to you that I am in favor of making every liberal appropriation that is required for necessities; but I am not in favor, under present existing conditions, of reorganizing any corps where they can get along without it, in view of the existing conditions. A year ago, under the conditions that obtained at that time, I think your request was a desirable one; but at the present time the question is, Is the necessity for reorganization so pressing that public work of another character should be stopped for the benefit of this reorganization?

General O'REILLY. I think there is an absolute necessity for the reorganization. As for its relative necessity compared with other measures, of course you gentlemen are the judges. I will call your attention again, Mr. Prince, to this memorandum of the small expense entailed, which I think I have already read.

Mr. PRINCE. That may go in the hearing, which I will read very carefully.

STATEMENT OF THE HON. WILLIAM H. TAFT, SECRETARY OF WAR.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. HULL). We have before us the medical bill this morning, Mr. Secretary.

Secretary TAFT. I am very much interested in that bill.

The CHAIRMAN. It is Senate bill 4838.

Secretary TAFT. It is useless for me to explain to the committee what they have known for a long time, but what I have only recently come to know—that the general plan of the reorganization of the Army is not adjusted in its various branches in proper proportion for an army in the field of 60,000 men; but that army is a skeleton upon which to construct a very much larger army, having much greater in proportion than an army in the field would have those branches which it would take a long time to prepare for actual service.

For instance, we now have in the Army a much greater proportion of cavalry to infantry than any army of 60,000 in the field would possibly need, because, should a war come on, it would be a great deal easier to increase the infantry than it would be the cavalry. And in the same way we have now a larger proportion of artillery in time of peace than we should have in war, though by no means so large a proportion as we ought to have in accordance with the general plan; because, first, we have a large coast defense, which is not a mobile part of the Army at all, and is hardly to be considered as a part of the Army in the field. In carrying out this plan of a skeleton army to be readily expanded it is necessary to maintain a Medical Corps that will be adequate to meet the needs of a much larger Army than the 60,000 men that you now have. Instead of that kind of a corps, you have one that in order to attend to the present needs of the Army of 60,000 men, you have to employ, in addition to the regular corps, 200 contract surgeons.

This bill contemplates a formation of a Medical Corps which shall meet the needs of the present service and at the same time have the nucleus for an expansion into an efficient corps for a very much larger Army than the 60,000 men that are now on the rolls. The present permanent force of the corps is only 320 men. The bill contemplates an increase to 450 men. The present force, including the 200 contract surgeons, is something over 500.

The CHAIRMAN. Right there—there were 165 contract surgeons.

Secretary TAFT. You are right about that; there were previously 200, but the number is now reduced to 165.

The CHAIRMAN. I only suggest that because I did not want your statement and mine to clash.

Secretary TAFT. You are quite right. One difficulty about these bills, or at least the papers written with respect to bills, is that they

have been pending a long time, and statements that were true at one time have ceased to be true as of to-day. That is also true with respect to the matter of increased expense contemplated by the bill. The increased expense is different now from what it was when the first statement was made with respect to the bill.

MR. HAY. Have you any information from the armies in the East, say Japan, as to the importance of having a corps prepared beforehand for use in time of war?

Secretary TAFT. I have here an extract from a report from Capt. Peyton C. March, of the General Staff, and military attaché with the Japanese army. He has just come back, after having been over there with the Japanese army at the battles of the Yalu River, Liaoyang, and through Manchuria. This is what he says on that general subject:

[Extract from report of Capt. Peyton C. March, General Staff, military attaché with Japanese army.]

MEDICAL SERVICE.

The sanitary problems arising on a modern battlefield are of the first magnitude. The tremendous number of wounded exhausts the capacity of the medical department not only to actually treat the cases, but to handle the administrative problems arising from having to take care of the records and equipment of an army of wounded men. I desire to add that, whatever may be the theoretical arguments offered in opposition to the increase in our Medical Corps asked for by the Surgeon-General last winter, my experience here has convinced me that the General Staff should put itself on record as approving and recommending such an increase. Our present Medical Corps, assisted by the volunteer and State surgeons, upon whom we could rely in time of war, will, in my opinion, be wholly inadequate to the task of handling the sanitary problems of a great war, and in that emergency it will be extremely ill for the General Staff, if it can be stated with truth, that the number and grades of officers desired by the Surgeon-General to render his corps able to handle those problems have not been authorized because of the opposition of the General Staff. Congress may or may not grant such an increase. That is another question.

This was not written for the purpose of publication, but is his view, gathered from actual experience on the fields of battle.

I will read also an extract from a letter of another American officer in Manchuria, wherein he says:

Perhaps I might add this conclusion I have reached, namely, that the immense losses sustained in modern battles require provisions to be made for medical service on a much larger scale than heretofore. I doubt if the medical department of any of the large armies are adjusted to this new condition. * * * I shall be with you in the future for such an expansive organization as will enable your department to meet the requirements of modern field service; that is, if I am in a position to render any aid at all along those lines.

I ought first to say that the plan of the present bill to meet the demand of expansion is to create instead of the contract surgeons what we call the medical reserve corps. In certain respects it is not very different from the contract service, except that it makes an eligible list of candidates for the Medical Corps that has not heretofore existed. The increase from 320 to 450 is properly proportioned between the upper grades, with a view of giving an opportunity for promotion from the lower grades, which have been very difficult to fill. The increase in the upper grades is a strong inducement to young physicians of character and ability to meet the examinations. The opportunities in the Medical Corps of the Army under the present arrangement are by no means equal to those in the Navy, and

they do not seem to be strong enough by way of inducement to lead men to take examinations which are regarded as fairly stiff.

Now, with respect to expense. When the bill was first proposed, it would have caused, under the then law, or rather the application of the law to the then circumstances, no increase in cost for the first year. At the end of five years the increase in cost would have been \$50,000 a year. As it is, however, the increased length of service of those whose pay must be taken into consideration now will make the increase in cost, I think, the first year some \$12,600.

There is a feature that I put into the bill of my own motion. I reached the Department just in time to have presented for my decision the question whether the recommendation of the Chief of Staff reducing very much the ranking officers under the bill—I mean the high ranking officers—or the recommendation of one branch of the General Staff approving the recommendations of the Surgeon-General that there should be 20 colonels and 20 lieutenant-colonels, should be approved; and it seemed to me that we might make a compromise, so that the bill, as presented, is for a total of 16 colonels and 24 lieutenant-colonels. What I brought into the bill was a requirement that every man in the Medical Corps should pass an examination from one rank to another. The trouble about the Medical Corps—

The CHAIRMAN. Right there now. A man is examined when he first comes in?

Secretary TAFT. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. He serves five years' continuous service and then he passes another examination to be a captain. No matter where he is he must be sent back to his post—

Secretary TAFT. Wherever you can convene a board—

The CHAIRMAN. If he serves fifteen years you generally bring them here?

Secretary TAFT. No; I do not think so; they examine them in the Philippines.

The CHAIRMAN. Do they examine them in Alaska?

Secretary TAFT. I suppose those stationed in Alaska would have to come to San Francisco for their examination.

The CHAIRMAN. Under your board here?

Secretary TAFT. No; they have a board for the examination of officers for promotion in San Francisco and similar boards in the Philippine Islands.

The CHAIRMAN. Then, after he has served ten years at least, he has to pass another examination. So that during twenty-odd years of service he has passed three strict examinations. Don't you think if he has not demonstrated his ability up to that time that he had better be mustered out?

Secretary TAFT. I think that is the way to muster them out. I think examinations ought to be required to keep the older men, who are so likely to become deadwood, up to the mark, and if they do not pass examinations they should be retired.

The CHAIRMAN. A man's habits are formed by the time he is a major?

Secretary TAFT. Let him pursue those habits in retirement. You will never get a good corps or a good army if you do not eliminate the deadwood. I want him to keep up with the procession. The

trouble with a rigid seniority system of promotion without a rigid system of examinations that tests and excludes—and this is true not only of the Medical Corps, but even more so in the line of the Army—is the deadwood at the top.

The CHAIRMAN. We passed a law some years ago to retire men on examination. Do you know of any examined man who has been retired as a result of such an examination?

Secretary TAFT. I wish I did; but I do not.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you think you ever would?

Secretary TAFT. Well, I think you can count more on the medical examinations as real tests than you can on any others, excepting those of the ordnance.

The CHAIRMAN. I thought some years ago that we provided for getting rid of the deadwood by these examinations. I think one man was retired out of the whole list, up to this time.

Secretary TAFT. This bill says that a medical officer failing in his examination shall be barred from promotion. I think a man who can not pass to the next rank ought to be retired.

Mr. HAY. I agree with you.

Mr. PARKER. Do you not think it would be fair to have competitive examinations between three in each case, and unless a man came in first in the three the way they do in the civil service—

Secretary TAFT. There is, perhaps, some ground for approving such a suggestion. But what we must consider is the strong feeling against selection and in favor of the seniority plan. Severe examinations by which incompetent, lazy, and unambitious officers are retired overcome some of the objections of the seniority plan. I do not think that even the strongest advocates of the seniority plan can advance any real objection, whereas if you have selections by competitive examinations an examination may show whether a man is fit to go up; but as between three examinations, it by no means is sure that the best examination is the safest test for determining the best of the three officers, especially after the appointing power may have the benefit of the long experience with the three men in actual service upon which to base a judgment.

Mr. DENNY. That is true.

Mr. PARKER. That is true of all examinations, whether passed or competitive.

Secretary TAFT. It is not so much the case in pass examinations. They usually do show whether a man has kept up with the procession, especially with respect to the science of medicine, because medical science is progressive. We ought to have in the field and in sanitary matters the advantage of real scientists, men who keep up with what is going on in the world in medical investigation and science.

The Surgeon-General presents this paper, which I will read, and which reflects credit on the Medical Department as compared with other branches of the Army in respect to examinations:

Result of examinations for promotion, Medical Department, U. S. Army, since 1862.

Found not qualified for promotion and resignation accepted.....	16
Found not qualified for promotion at first examination; subsequently reexamined and found qualified.....	18

Found not qualified for promotion at first examination; suspended from promotion for one year; found qualified at second examination-----	2
Found not qualified for promotion and retired or died before second examination-----	4
Found physically disqualified for promotion, and subsequently reexamined and found qualified-----	3
Found physically disqualified for promotion, followed by retirement or death-----	9
Found qualified for promotion, but to be reexamined physically-----	2
Found not qualified for advancement to rank of captain, suspended from advancement for one year, found qualified upon reexamination-----	6
Found not qualified for advancement to rank of captain, suspended from advancement for one year (period of suspension unexpired)-----	4
Not physically able to undergo examination when ordered-----	2

SUMMARY.

Examination resulted in separation from service-----	29
Examination resulted in suspension of promotion-----	37
Total-----	66

I think that is a very much better showing than in any other branch of the Army, excepting possibly the ordnance.

Mr. YOUNG. When a medical officer, long before the expiration of his term of service, becomes deadwood, as you say, inefficient, and incompetent, why, instead of retiring him, should not he be dropped from the Army—dismissed altogether?

Secretary TAFT. I think that would be fair up to a certain rank, like the rank of captain or major. If a man has been permitted to remain in the service for twenty years, it is to be assumed in his favor that he has rendered some good service, even though he may have reached the point where no service is better than any service for him. Of course, we are dealing with human beings in considering the probability as to the action of examining boards. It might be very difficult to get an examining board to find an officer wanting if the result of the finding were that after twenty years' service he was to be thrown out on the world without any means of support.

Mr. YOUNG. There may be something in that; but the growth of the retired list seems to be a pretty serious thing in the Army, especially in the higher grades.

Secretary TAFT. It is. The retired list grows for one reason, because there is such slowness in promotion, and the retired list offers an opportunity for promotion.

You have already made provision for men who have served in the civil war. A lieutenant-colonel came into my office the other day, a lieutenant-colonel of artillery, having had his hand shot off and one finger here [indicating], and had a bullet or two in his body. He worked all of his life for the United States, and he was going to retire as a colonel. There was an opportunity to make him brigadier-general if a vacancy came on. He certainly was as much entitled to reward as anybody who had served during the war, and the President's heart is just as human as others.

Mr. YOUNG. He made him brigadier-general?

Secretary TAFT. He made him brigadier-general.

Mr. YOUNG. We have some 236 retired brigadier-generals.

The CHAIRMAN. We have 240 now.

Secretary TAFT. And there are likely to be a good many more; but then, Congress did it, and you did it with your eyes open, because

you made provision that men who had served in both wars should be retired at a grade higher than that which they held at the time of their retirement.

The CHAIRMAN. Brigadier-generals do not go higher, but colonels and all ranks below that do. There are a good many yet to be made brigadier-generals.

Secretary TAFT. But there is no doubt that many of them are doing more for the Government in a state of retirement than they would be doing in active service, so I do not think the Government is losing anything by that procedure. Of course, I respect the men who have fine records in the civil war, but the truth is, gentlemen, that in the course of nature they are not fit for active service. Of course, there are many notable exceptions, but the rule is as I state it.

The CHAIRMAN. Would not the proposition to retire the men who do not reach a certain rank at a certain age compel the different branches of the Army to eliminate the deadwood?

Secretary TAFT. Yes, sir; I think that strict examinations will also do it. We have a lot of papers in the Department now filed by different officers, and I hope to take three months—that is a very short time for so great a problem—to see if I can not draft a bill of some sort to present to Congress at the opening of the next session with a view of mitigating the evils of rigid seniority promotion. I do not know that it can be done; I suppose every Secretary tries it.

The CHAIRMAN. How about selections?

Secretary TAFT. I think the system of selection has so many evils in it that it would be very difficult to provide against them. In the English naval service they have just the provision that you mention, that of requiring a man of a certain age who has not reached a certain rank to retire.

The CHAIRMAN. That rule also obtains in the English army.

Secretary TAFT. I did not know that. I think, however, in the English navy they have a system of selection up to the post of captain. After that the selections are by seniority with certain examinations.

Mr. HOLLIDAY. Still it is complained that that is a bad system.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Secretary, do you desire to make any further statements?

Secretary TAFT. I think I have covered generally the reasons the Department has for supporting the bill. We are very anxious to get it through if we can. Then we shall have in the branches, at least so far as the officers are concerned, a condition meeting the demand should we have to form another army or increase the present organization.

Mr. HAY. You consider that this is absolutely necessary?

Secretary TAFT. I do not mean to say that we could not get along as we are getting on now, but I mean the logical formation of an army on the plans that I first stated requires this bill. I think we ought to keep a corps which will bear expansion and be ready for the needs of the Army, instead of having the very unsatisfactory condition that existed at the opening of the Spanish war. This bill will largely alleviate those troubles.

Mr. SLAYDEN. You think the great desirability of the plan of reorganization more than balances the trifling increase of expense?

Secretary TAFT. I do.

Mr. HOLLIDAY. In estimating the increase in expense you have not taken into consideration what we call "fogy" pay, or the increase growing out of the three-quarters pay on retirement?

Secretary TAFT. Of course men grow older each year, and when the period elapses that requires higher pay that will go on. It would not, however, go on with the contract surgeons, that is true.

Mr. HOLLIDAY. As it is now they get no "fogy" pay, no retirement pay?

Secretary TAFT. Of course the "fogy" pay would increase.

Mr. PATTERSON. Would it be wise to extend the time for the completion of this reorganization a year or two longer?

Secretary TAFT. It now contemplates four years, and I think four years is moderate.

The CHAIRMAN. There is another proposition which I did not mention, but the "fogy" pay attaches to the higher ranks. If a man is a major and has served twenty years he gets 40 per cent of a major's pay; a lieutenant-colonel gets 40 per cent of his pay, and the man who serves twenty years as captain gets 40 per cent.

Mr. DENNY. Your theory is that the service of the contract surgeon is not to be compared with that of a skilled army surgeon of long experience?

Secretary TAFT. I should think not. I have some personal knowledge of the unsatisfactory relations that exist between the contract surgeons and the Army. There are no persons who learn so quickly the difference between a real and a "Mex" officer, if you may call him such, as the enlisted men. The life of a contract surgeon, especially one who is at all sensitive, is taken up in resenting slights. It is not a healthy attachment to any branch, but a collection of men that are neither fish, flesh, nor fowl, and I think the esprit de corps of the whole service, that branch of the service, would be very much better if the contract surgeon could be entirely eliminated. Among the dental surgeons—

Mr. YOUNG. I was going to say right there that this bill seems to have stored them all up. Do you think that the dental surgeons would be more efficient if they were army officers than under their present status?

Secretary TAFT. That is a problem that I have not undertaken to solve yet.

The CHAIRMAN. The dental surgeons are very anxious for a commissioned rank.

Mr. HAY. They do not have to command any men, or anything of that sort?

Secretary TAFT. No; they do not, but the contract surgeons do. They come in close contact with the hospital-corps men. I understand that the War Department has ruled that the contract surgeon can not order men. I have not seen that ruling. It probably came from the Judge-Advocate-General's Office and grows out of a statute, but I have never had occasion to consider it at all.

Mr. YOUNG. The dental surgeon has no administrative duties to perform?

Secretary TAFT. None at all.

Mr. PARKER. And he has no dangers on the field of battle?

Secretary TAFT. Practically none. He presides over a chair.

Mr. PATTERSON. You do not consider it necessary to put any provision in this bill for the compulsory retirement of contract surgeons at the end of their service?

Secretary TAFT. I do not think it is necessary. I understand that they are all quite willing to accept change to the present system—to go right in as lieutenants at less salary than they are now receiving as contract surgeons—which is a very marked indication of the advantage that there is in giving them this standing, though terminable at the will of the President, over a relation established by contract.

May I insert a statement as to the increase in cost which has been prepared in the office of the Surgeon-General of the Army?

The CHAIRMAN. Certainly.

INCREASE OF COST.

The estimates prepared by the Paymaster-General a year ago showed that there would be no increase of expense for the next fiscal year and that where the increase was consummated on the fourth year the total added cost would be only \$23,000 in a pay roll of \$1,134,000. An estimate made yesterday by the Surgeon-General's Office, based on data which is probably more exact, shows that the increase of expense for the next fiscal year will be \$12,600, and that the total increase four years hence will be \$43,000. These are outside estimates, which may be diminished but can not be exceeded. Thus the increased cost for the next fiscal year will be, by the Paymaster-General's estimate, nothing; by the Surgeon-General's, about 1 per cent, and the ultimate increase four years hence will be between 2 and 4 per cent. By this trifling expenditure we increase the Medical Corps by 130 officers and rectify the flow of promotion in the corps.

As the efficiency of the service in time of war depends directly on the number of trained officers, it may be said that an increased efficiency of 40 per cent is gained at an ultimate increased cost of 4 per cent. The reason why so much can be accomplished at so slight a cost is that the pay of the reserve corps is the same as that of lieutenants of the regular establishment, which is two hundred a year less than the pay of contract surgeons, the total saving on this item being \$33,400. Yet so unsatisfactory to themselves is the present status of the contract surgeons that they are apparently unanimous in their willingness to submit to this reduction in order to get the honorable status of commissioned officers.

Thereupon, at 12.10 o'clock p. m., the committee adjourned.

